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Its stream th' immortal spirit bore
Triumphant to th' eternal shore.
Pass not by the sacred tide,
Still as healing and as free,
As when, from a Saviour's side,
First it flow'd on Calvary ;
It hath balm to soothe the soul,
Wounded by the chast'ning rod—
Ever bright its waters roll
To the blest abodes of God !
There, where hush'd is every sigh,
Calm'd the fears of every breast,
Tears are wiped from every eye,
And the weary are at rest.

J. S. M.

A SKETCH FROM REAL LIFE.

“ Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.”

On a cold evening in the month of March, while journeying through the western part of Leinster, I was overtaken by a heavy fall of snow and sleet—when, attracted by its neat and comfortable aspect, I was induced to seek a temporary shelter from the storm in a cottage at the entrance of a small village. Although the appearance of a stranger seemed to excite little interest among the inmates of this dwelling, I received a kindly welcome, and a chair was placed for me at the fire, which burned not, however, with the cheerful sparkle of the winter's hearth. The family group consisted of a middle-aged man and woman, and their three daughters. The man appeared to be beyond fifty, and possessed that *aboriginal* characteristic of countenance which so strikingly distinguishes the inhabitants of some districts of Ireland. His deep-set and penetrating eye had assumed the settled expression of melancholy—care more than age seeming have made havoc on his strongly-marked features, and stamped his wrinkled brow, around which his jetty locks, slightly sprinkled with grey, were spread in clustering curls. The woman, who was a few years younger, presented a sad, though remarkably prepossessing countenance—in youth she must have been truly handsome. In the appearance of the eldest daughter there was nothing that would particularly attract attention ; but the youngest, who was still far from womanhood, bore ample promise of future beauty. The other female who sat upon a low chair, with her head averted and resting upon her hand, appeared absorbed in thoughtfulness or sorrow : when, with a slow and listless movement, she raised her head, the expression of her countenance had a strange and absorbing influence upon my feelings ; she seemed like a fair and blighted flower of the East, transferred from its native home to some cold and wintry region—a sad and faded, but strangely abiding, resemblance of what it once had been. I never beheld such a living wreck of loveliness. The finger of decay was set upon her—the elasticity of life was gone—and the irregular and fitful heavings of the bosom told that the heart was broken, that the impulses of being had lost, irrecoverably lost, their play. Yet, like lights amidst a wilderness, there shone forth a supernatural brilliancy from her eyes, that had power to penetrate the soul with an awakening and at the same time subduing influence. The impression made upon

my mind by this little groupe, was perhaps the more deep, when contrasted with the scenes of riot and drunkenness which I had encountered in my journey during the day, it being the anniversary of the tutelary saint of Ireland, the 17th of March.

Entering into conversation with the father of the family, I found him intelligent beyond what could be expected from a person moving in his rank of life: when roused into the spirit of debate, there was a wild and mirthful irony in his observations, and, when speaking of mankind and the secret springs of action, there was a bitter sarcasm in his manner, which showed the genuine current of his feelings to have been poisoned either by misfortune or injury. The violence of the storm continuing, I felt little inclination to seek elsewhere the needful accommodation for the night; and accordingly expressed a hope that the family could, without inconvenience, make such arrangements as would render my departure unnecessary. The reply was in accordance with my wishes; and a fire was kindled in another room, to which it was intimated I might retire at my discretion. I did so speedily, fearing my presence might prove a restraint upon their domestic pursuits. My host accompanied me, and I requested him, if leisure permitted, to sit with me for a while. He readily consented; and feeling an anxious curiosity relative to the history of the family in which chance had thus placed me, I gradually led the conversation to matters connected with himself, and then hinted my desire to be made acquainted with some of the events of his life.

"The annals of the poor," said he, "are usually short and simple; and as a sad tale becomes doubly so when long, brevity shall mark the tracing of my humble story. I was the only son of a country gentleman of small fortune, by whose death I became master of it. It was sufficient, however, with prudence, to support a family in competence. I accordingly married early, and my wife, whom you have seen, brought me nothing but great personal beauty and a well-cultivated and virtuous mind. A few months after our union, that unfortunate attempt for freedom—that fatal catastrophe for Ireland—the rebellion, broke out. I was young and enthusiastic, and could not be an inactive spectator; you know the sequel of that event. Being of some consequence amongst the defeated party, I was strictly sought after, and was necessarily forced to fly my home; and my faithful and more than heroic wife was my companion for months, when in caves and fastnesses I was obliged to conceal myself—amidst peril and privation she counselled and consoled me, and no murmur, no complaint, ever burst from her smiling lips. When the storm had completely subsided, my pardon was stipulated for, and I returned—but not, alas, to my home—I had no home. Our mansion had been burned, and our property, cattle, household furniture, and all which we possessed, had become the prey of the spoiler. Ejected from the principal part of my property, ruin stared me in the face. However, with the little money, and it was very little, that remained to me, I retired to a small farm, which I held at a low rent, in a distant part of the country; and there, at least for a few years, I tasted the joys of a pure, domestic tranquillity. We were frugal and industrious, and prosperity followed all our little enterprises; we were blessed with a promising family, in whose tender minds it was our constant study to plant the principles of solid virtue, and we succeeded in giving them an education perhaps superior to their lot in life. We had two sons and three daughters; and we were indulging the hope, that, from our success in farming, we should be able to bring up our elder

son to the profession of the law, and to purchase a commission for the other.

“Our landlord was a needy man, and had always drawn the rent in advance; knowing that we were acquiring money by our labours, he one day sent for me, and stated to me that, being in want of cash, he was willing, on receiving a suitable fine, to renew my lease at a mere nominal rent. He urged that I should thereby secure a *certainly* for my family; and seeing what I thought unquestionable advantages in the arrangement, I was induced to devote to the payment of the fine every shilling which years of frugality had accumulated. The new lease was accordingly made out, and with a joyous heart I returned to my wife and children. The extravagance of my landlord was such, however, that the money he received from me was soon dissipated; and he had not the means of liquidating a sum due for the education of his only son, who had been placed at the same school with Edward, my younger boy. A close intimacy had sprung up between these two youths; and the trouble of the one formed a source of grief to the other. One day Edward returned from school in a state of evident dejection and anxiety; and on being questioned as to the cause, he stated that poor A——’s trunks were detained at school, until his father should settle the account; with tears in his eyes, he entreated me to advance the money, urging that I could not lose by it, since his friend and school-fellow would doubly repay me when, being of age, he should obtain possession of a property which was to devolve to him independent of his father. I was ill able to grant his request at the time; but, moved by the boy’s generous feelings, I promised to do so; and accordingly I saw my landlord next day, and lent him fifty pounds for the purpose, taking his note for the amount.

“My landlord’s difficulties, however, increased; and two or three years after the event just related, he became a prisoner for debt. Notwithstanding his inconsiderate extravagance, I had always looked upon him as a kind-hearted man, and as one totally incapable of baseness; and I quickly repaired to visit him in his confinement. But conceive my grief and amazement, when from his own lips I learned that he himself was a *tenant for life*, and had therefore no right to take my money for the renewal of a lease which left me at the mercy of his successor! Shame upon human nature, thus to betray the ignorant and the confiding, and draw from hard-working honesty the very means of existence! He died in prison—leaving me and many others the victims of his perfidy. His son then wanted two years of his majority; and our only hope rested on his disposition to fulfil his father’s contract. Edward, at whose instance I had lent the fifty pounds, often consoled me with the recollection of that kind act, saying that it was impossible that Mr. A—— would not remember it with gratitude, and renew our lease when he should have power so to do. We were aware that some of our neighbours, knowing the uncertain tenure by which we held, had, long before the young landlord’s majority, sent in proposals for taking our farm at a high rent; but we felt little uneasiness on the subject. Yet, can you believe it? the day after his minority he sent to me a fellow, who acted as his agent, to order me to come and take out a new lease at an enormous rent, or prepare to defend myself in an action at law. I will pass over the feelings of myself and family—I could not attempt to describe them. My two sons were grown up, and had received an education that ill prepared them for a laborious life; and my helpless

daughters, the youngest of them a babe at the breast, were sources of melancholy interest to an anxious father's heart.

"Edward was of a rash, wild, but generous character—his elder brother, John, greatly the reverse. The latter had spent much time in metaphysical studies, and was of a mind gloomy in its tendency; he despised mankind in general, and regarded all their actions, good or bad, as the result of the circumstances in which they were placed. He was, however, from infancy, mild and gentle in his manners, and the self-command that he at all times manifested, had something so dark, deep, and mysterious in it, that I could never penetrate it. When the determination of our ungrateful landlord was known, it was melancholy to behold those emotions of countenance which portrayed the mental sufferings of Edward; for several days his conduct was abstracted and reserved—he could neither eat nor drink, and the hour of prayer, which he was wont so punctually to observe, was no longer heeded by him. No interrogatories could draw from him the purpose on which his soul evidently brooded;—once, indeed, he remarked, that to those he loved he could not say 'farewell,' and consequently that we should not be surprised at the sudden absence which his departure for America or the East Indies might cause. These observations we attributed to the wanderings of a wounded and unquiet spirit, rather than to any fixed resolve of a deliberative mind. A few nights afterwards, however, he went to bed more melancholy if possible than usual—and I never saw or heard of him since."

Here the tears gushed from the eyes of the afflicted father; but hastily brushing them away, as if in scorn of his own weakness, he continued: "I have too much reason to fear, that the horrible intention of shooting his old school-fellow had entered into his mind; for, about a month after he left his home, an account appeared in the newspapers, that as Mr. A—— and a friend were walking in the suburbs of London, late in the evening, they were accosted by a young man in disguise, who, standing at a distance, threw down a pistol to A——, and presenting another, desired him to defend himself. A—— and his friend attempted to close upon the maniac, as they thought him, and in the effort he wounded both, and then precipitately made his escape. A—— and his friend, I am glad to say, recovered of their wounds, though the former seems only to have lived to inherit his father's vices and profligacy. What was strange in this affair, not a shadow of suspicion ever rested upon Edward, as it was supposed he had proceeded directly to America on leaving my house. But I have every reason to fear that my unfortunate son is long since dead.

"Notwithstanding the enormous rent under which we laboured, we struggled on through a succession of difficulties for a few years, when an event happened, which brightened up our gloomy hopes—only, however, that they should be overcast by deeper sorrow and disappointment. A young man of independent fortune came to reside in our neighbourhood. Accident introduced him to me; and finding, as he said, a pleasure in my conversation, he was often at my house. He was a man of noble principle and singular generosity; and when he had learned the story of my misfortunes, he would, had I permitted, have purchased for me the fee-simple of my farm. He saw my second eldest daughter, Margaret, and loved her—ay, and she was worthy of his love, if great personal beauty, and greater mental excellence, could make her so.—The attachment was mutual; the day of the marriage was fixed, and the bridal dresses purchased. He was with us night and day, and I

fancied that the loss of my beloved Edward was about to be replaced by one of an equally amiable disposition. A few days before the intended marriage, this good and generous youth called, and presenting Margaret with some valuable ornament, desired her to prepare her best looks for the approaching occasion. A modest glance and affectionate smile were her only reply ;—and never can I forget the supreme delight that played upon her lovely countenance, when, mounting a fiery courser, he dashed gallantly out of the yard. Short-lived, alas, is human happiness—

— “ Like the snowfall in a river,
A moment white, then melts for ever.”

He had proceeded that morning to a fox-hunt—and his horse, leaping into a deep and rapid river which crossed his course, threw his rider under him—and, ere assistance could be had, he was drowned. You saw that breathing monument of hopelessness, who, as the betrothed bride of him she most tenderly loved, was once so truly happy ; and you can judge how she has suffered. From the fatal day of the accident, now four years, she has never ceased to pine in secret and all-consuming sorrow ; and I much fear that the broken spirit must soon cease to animate her wasted form.

“ I should have told you that my elder son had been many years absent from us ; he had become connected with a London newspaper, and was merely able to support himself by his labours in that way. Finding, after many struggles, that our farm was too much for us to manage, we gave it up, and came here, where I possessed a few acres that for ages had been the property of our family, and through which we trusted never to know absolute want. But, by the baseness and covetousness of man, I am likely to be deprived of even this last resource. This land was a portion of the property of the late Lord ———, and, with his other possessions, was to be sold for the benefit of his creditors. The benevolent Mr. F——, who is a relative of mine, gave my son the means of purchasing it for us ; and he thought that his aged parents and poor sisters would be thus placed above the possibility of want. The day of sale arrived, and my son employed an attorney to attend and purchase for him. That their profession has a tendency to make knaves of attorneys—and that for payment they can *neglect* as well as *attend to* business, is certain ; our attorney neglected our interests, and a Scotchman, who had lately fixed himself in our neighbourhood, became the possessor of the land. When my son was made acquainted with the unexpected result, he went to the Scotchman, and, explaining to him the circumstances of the case, urged him to give up a purchase which had been so unfairly made, offering to make good all his expenses in the matter. The reply was that his brother in Dublin had acted for him, and to him my son was referred. This gentleman agreed to the proposal, and entered into a written engagement, on getting fifteen pounds for himself. This, however, appears to have been only a stratagem to keep my son from opening the sale ; for the purchaser refused to ratify the agreement, on the plea that his brother, who negotiated it, was then a minor. Thus are we placed at the mercy of a man who, for a paltry advantage, would seek to drive a care-worn family from their humble home—and yet this man is a minister of religion ! My eldest daughter had formed an attachment for a very worthy young man ; and although he was as penniless as ourselves, I did not oppose the union. They were married a few days since—and you know what poverty added to poverty will produce.”

The recital of this unfortunate man's story filled my heart with emotions too strong for utterance. We separated for the night, and I retired to bed, but not to sleep; and, rising early the following morning, with a heavy heart, I prepared for my departure. By the attentive kindness of these poor people, a homely breakfast had been already prepared, of which they anxiously pressed me to partake. I did so, and afterwards availed myself of an opportunity to converse with the melancholy Margaret. I found that she patiently looked forward to that period which should bring her to Him whose hand shall wipe all tears from every eye, and when her disembodied spirit should be reunited to that of him who had gone but a little before her; and it was strange to see the playful satisfaction with which she dwelt upon a promise she had drawn from her mother, that in death she should be clothed in those bridal garments, which in life she was doomed never to wear. With something like sickness of heart, I parted from my humble friends, and inwardly, though bitterly, did I deplore that fate which left me without the means to succour those who so much needed and deserved assistance.

Some months afterwards, while sitting in the coffee-room of a hotel in Liverpool, a traveller, who appeared to have experienced the bronzing influence of a tropical sun, entered the apartment;—he had just arrived in a packet-ship from South America. There was a dignity and high bearing about him, which greatly attracted my attention—and his countenance had a faint resemblance to one deeply impressed upon my memory. It is sufficient to say, that, having fallen into conversation with him, I was not a little gratified to find in him the lost son of my Irish friend; nor was he less surprised that a stranger could give him such ample intelligence of his family, of whom he had heard nothing for above thirteen years. It required little persuasion to induce me to accompany him to Ireland;—the meeting was affecting in the extreme. My first impulse was to look around for the beautiful Margaret; death had been in the mansion of my friends, and had led that wandering spirit home. I felt the burning tear gush from my eye, as the sad truth came upon my soul;—her presence still haunts my memory. But to conclude:—Edward, having acquired considerable property, was now able to make the old age of his parents comparatively easy. His first care was to place his married sister in comfortable circumstances; and by a memorial to the Lord Chancellor, the sale of the little property was opened, and Edward became its purchaser for his father. I remained a few days with my now happy friends, and then took my reluctant departure; having, however, previously visited the humble grave of Margaret, over which still hung the withered garlands—memorials of her friends' affection.

L.

THE SHIP.

The sun poured down his molten light
Upon the bark, careering bright;
And as she winged her homeward flight,
The salt waves sparkled brilliantly.

How gallantly she held her way,
Dashing around the white sea-spray,
And looking, on that glorious day,
A queen upon her element.